

# A NEW SPECIES OF *PERSICULA* FROM THE ARABIAN SEA (MARGINELLIDAE)

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## *Persicula masirana* Roth and Petit, new species

**Description of holotype:** Shell of medium size for the genus, solid, ovate, narrower anteriorly; surface polished, unsculptured except for faint growth lines. Color mottled yellowish tan with a broad, reddish brown peripheral band and eleven narrow, spiral rows of alternating white and brown spots. The first row of spots placed immediately below the suture, the rows on either margin of the peripheral band larger than the rest, and the four rows on the band itself being very small and fine. A narrow spiral row of white spots occurs just anterior to the brown band, and another just posterior to it. Spire not visible, immersed in a pad of brown callus. Outer lip white, arching above spire, terminating posteriorly in a wash of white enamel which partly covers apical callus pad; lip margin rounded, slightly thickened externally, its anterior half having about 12 faint, oblong denticles a short distance inside aperture. Aperture narrow, widening anteriorly, white inside, with a curved sulcus at posterior end and a deep, oblique anterior canal. Parietal wall convex, covered with translucent, white callus which thickens to a node in front of the posterior sulcus. Columella with eight folds, including one at base of columella; the two most anterior folds strong, extending onto body whorl; remaining folds much smaller, confined to aperture, becoming increasingly faint posteriorly. Length 10.0 mm.; greatest diameter 7.2 mm.

Holotype, no. 51327, Delaware Museum of Natural History; type locality: Ras Jidufah (local name: Monument Beach) at northeast tip of Masirah Island (21°N, 59°E), in the Arabian Sea, off the coast of the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman; collected by Sgt. Eric Thompson, Royal Air Force, early February, 1971. The holotype was found in beach drift. Although we have been able to examine only the holotype, notes from the collector indicate that it was not the only specimen collected.

**Discussion:** With its pattern of spiral rows of spots and single peripheral band, *Persicula masirana* differs from all other species of the genus. It is most nearly

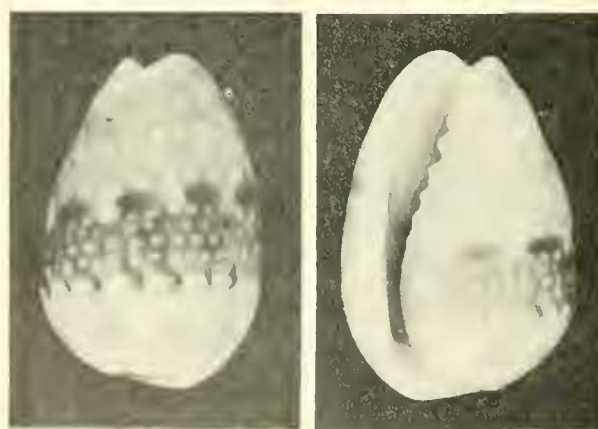
like *Persicula catenata* (Montagu, 1803) from Florida and the Caribbean. The latter species averages 6 mm. long; it has a tan shell, spiral rows of white sagittate spots which are margined with brown lines on the side nearest the outer lip, and three brown spiral bands, each crossed by a single row of V-shaped dashes. Less similar are the Caribbean *P. sagittata* (Hinds, 1844) and eastern Pacific *P. phrygia* (Sowerby, 1846), which lack brown banding entirely.

Among Indian Ocean species, *Persicula pulchella* (Kiener, 1834), reported from Australia to the Persian Gulf, has waved axial brown lines on a white ground.

The genus *Persicula* is an old one, with forms much like some Recent species first appearing in the Eocene. *Persicula masirana* and the similarly-patterned Caribbean species may be isolated survivors of a Tethyan stock which has undergone little modification since the early Tertiary.

## LITERATURE CITED

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Figs. 1, 2. *Persicula masirana* Roth & Petit, new species. Dorsal and ventral views of holotype, length 10 mm.